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Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INR-07

INRE-00 SP-02 L-01 PM-03 EB-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 RSC-01

MC-01 /044 W
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O 100854Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7834

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 0173

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS KS
SUBJECT: LOCKHEED PROPELLENT PLANT

REF: STATE 05146

1. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS CONCERNS WITHIN DEPARTMENT REGARDING PROPOSED LOCKHEED PROPELLENT PLANT AND REQUIREMENT FOR CAREFUL STUDY OUTLINED TO AMBASSADOR HAHM (REFTEL). IN OUR OWN PERIODIC CONVERSATIONS WITH ROKS ON THIS SUBJECT WE HAVE POINTED OUT THAT SUBSTANTIAL ISSUES ARE IN QUESTION. WE FULLY AGREE MOREOVER WITH VIEW THAT WE SHOULD DO ALL WE CAN TO DISCOURAGE ROK EFFORTS TO DEVELOP INDEPENDENT MISSILE BUILDING CAPABILITY. AS WE SEE IT QUESTION IS HOW BEST TO DIRECT OUR EFFORT.

2. THERE IS AT PRESENT CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE WITHIN DYNAMIC AND GROWING AGENCY FOR DEFENSE DEVELOPMENT TO MOVE FORWARD WITH MISSILE DEVELOPMENT; AND THIS IS ENFORCED BY PRESIDENT PARK'S PERSONAL INTEREST IN AN INDEPENDENT MISSILE CAPABILITY. THERE ARE AT SAME TIME RESTRAINING FORCES WITHIN ROKG WHICH ACCORD MISSILE DEVELOPMENT LOWER PRIORITY. ALSO THERE ARE
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REALITIES: ADD VICE PRESIDENT YONG S. HONG JUST

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RETURNED FROM MORE THAN TEN YEARS AEROSPACE WORK
IN US HAS TOLD US MANY ROK MISSILE PROPONENTS HAVE
LITTLE CONCEPT AT THIS POINT OF HUMAN AS WELL AS
ECONOMIC COSTS INVOLVED AND THAT MISSILE EFFORT LIABLE
TO BE CURTAILED AS THESE FACTORS BECOME BETTER UNDER-
STOOD.

3. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT BY DENYING APPROVAL OF
LOCKHEED PLANT WE CAN POSSIBLY DELAY ROK MISSILE
DEVELOPMENT,GIVEN CURRENT POLITICAL STEAM BEHIND
EFFORT HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE IT LIKELY ROKS WILL GO
ELSEWHERE FOR NECESSARY TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT TO MEET
THIS SPECIFIC REQUIREMENT (MOST PROBABLY FRANCE). THIS COULD IN
TURN LEAD TO THEIR GOING ELSEWHERE FOR OTHER MISSILE TECHNOOLGY.
WE COULD AS CONSEQUENCE LOSE TOUCH WITH DEVELOPMENTS
IN THIS VITAL AREA AND OUR INFLUENCE AND ABILITY TO
WIELD LEVERAGE ON FUTURE CRITICAL MISSILE DEVELOPMENT
ISSUES WOULD DECLINE. OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE
MILITARY SALES COULD BE LOST. ALSO NEGATIVE DECISION
ON LOCKHEED ISSUE COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT ROK DECISIONS
IN OTHER AREAS OF INTEREST.

4. EMBASSY APPRECIATES THAT FROM WASHINGTON POINT
OF VIEW OTHER CONSIDERATIONS BEAR ON THIS DECISION.
WE CONCULDE HOWEVER, THAT THESE OTHER CONSIDERATIONS
BEING EQUAL, PREFEREBLE COURSE IN PRESENT SITUATION
WOULD BE TO APPROVE SALE THIS RELATIVELY LOW
TECHNOLOGY PLANT. AT SAME TIME TO PROTECT OUR
CENTRAL INTERESTS WE SHOULD
IMPOSE ADEQUATE STRICTURES IN AGREEMENT LIMITING
PLANT'S USE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERRED.
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